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## I INTRODUCTION

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Coal, a combustible organic rock composed primarily of carbon, hydrogen,

Coal is burned to produce energy and is used to manufacture steel. It is a source of chemicals used to make medicine, fertilizers, pesticides, and other products. Coal comes from ancient plants buried over millions of years in Earth's crust, a layer. Coal, petroleum, natural gas, and oil shale are all known as fossil fuels because they come from the remains of ancient life buried deep in the crust.

Coal is rich in hydrocarbons (compounds made up of the elements hydrogen and carbon). All life forms contain hydrocarbons, and in general, material that contains hydrocarbons is called organic material. Coal originally formed from ancient plants that died and were buried under layers of sediment during the Carboniferous Period, about 360 million to 290 million years ago. As more and more layers of sediment formed,

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